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the scheme is being reinvestigated to see whether it can be made remunerative. If it could be made remunerative, certainly we will take up the scheme.

Issue of permits to small fleet owners

12 noon. * 304 *Q.*—Sri V. R. KRISHNA AYYAR : Will the Hon. the Minister for Religious Endowments and Transport be pleased to state—

(*a*) whether the Government have issued any instructions to the Regional Transport Authorities not to issue permits to small fleet owners;

(*b*) whether the Government have received any complaints from motor operators in Malabar that the marking system recently introduced by Government eliminates the small operators from the field; and

(*c*) whether the Government have prescribed the minimum standards for the workshops to be maintained by operators?

The Hon. Sri B. PARAMESWARAN : (*a*) No; on the other hand, Government have given preference to viable units of 5 buses.

(*b*) No, the system is in favour of small operators.

(*c*) Yes, Sir.

While issuing certain directions under section 43 (A) (1) of the Motor Vehicles Act regarding the principles to be observed by Transport Authorities in the matter of grant of stage carriage permits, variation or extension of routes, etc., the Government considered that efficiency in running depends on the constant attention which the permit-holders, with their own workshop, can give. The minimum equipment of workshop to be considered to satisfy this preference is shown in the statement[a] placed on the table of the House.

Sri M. KALYANASUNDARAM : Sir, I wonder how the Hon. Minister asserts that the rule-making system is working to the advantage of the small operators. If, according to him, one-bus owners and two-bus owners are not small operators, I cannot understand who are small bus owners. I can quote an instance in which a bus operator owning only one bus was not . . .

Mr. SPEAKER : I may tell the hon. Member that he has to put a supplementary question.

Sri M. KALYANASUNDARAM : I am coming to that. I am now explaining the point. When a poor man got one additional bus, a fleet owner, who is having 60 buses, took the matter in appeal, and with the aid of the marking system, he was able

[a] Printed as Appendix on page 65 infra.

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to throw this man out and get the bus for himself. Will the Hon. Minister be prepared to enquire into the matter again and see how this marking system works?

THE HON. SRI B. PARAMESWARAN: The Planning Commission wanted that there should be a viable unit of ten buses. We wanted that such of those as possessed 8 to 9 buses should become owners of ten buses. Certain operators represented that only those who were having ten or more buses were granted permits and that small operators owning 4 or 5 buses were put to lot of difficulties, and that the chances of their getting permits were very remote. The Government thought they could reduce the number and fixed five as the viable unit to help the operators. The High Court wanted that two should be fixed as the unit and a rule should be laid down to this effect. The Government laid down certain rules. The marking system is considered to be the best so far as the small operators are concerned. Here and there, there may be some miscarriage of justice. There are appellate authorities who will go into such cases. On the whole, the Government are satisfied that the marking system is working satisfactorily. If owners of one or two buses are not preferred, reasons have got to be given by the authorities. The authorities have given sufficient reasons why those small operators were not selected. But, as promised the other day, the question of giving a handicap to such of those people as are owning one or two buses or to new entrants, is under the consideration of the Government.

SRI V. R. KRISHNA AYYAR: The Hon. Minister, I suppose, agrees that the small man has some place in the socialistic pattern of society. What happens is that those who are new entrants or have just one or two buses are always or often times denied permits. They are queried, 'How many buses you have already in the line; are you an operator already in the line.' All these queries have got to be answered against them, because a new operator can never have any buses already in the line. Another question that is put is, 'Is your organization a co-operative body?' We have had interpretations given that a limited company is a co-operative body. Therefore everybody else's claim is rejected in favour of a limited company. This interpretation has been given to carry out the purposes of the Government. But the result is the big man gets the buses and the small man gets weeded out.

THE HON. SRI B. PARAMESWARAN: We reduced the number from 10 to 5. I do not know how to reduce it still further. If there are any cases where difficulties are being experienced, the Government are prepared to consider those cases. But the Government have no revisionary powers. We have given powers to the appellate tribunal. All that I can say is that such of those people as are having one or two buses and new entrants who are aspiring to become operators have to be somehow or other helped. I know that they cannot be competing

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with the fleet owners. The small owners have also to fulfil certain conditions. They must be running their buses on the route. They must have their workshops, etc. In spite of all these, if still owners of one or two buses or new entrants are not able to get a bus permit, the Government will really think of seeing how best they can revise their rules.

SRI R. V. SWAMINATHAN : What is the number fixed for classifying one as a small operator or a big operator? If a big operator and a small operator should apply for a permit and the big operator is given a permit, will the Government come forward to examine the case and cancel the permit given to the big operator and give the permit to the small operator?

THE HON. SRI B. PARAMESWARAN : The Government have divested themselves of this responsibility of fixing up the number of permits for any particular operator. But, as I said, five is the viable unit, and all those people who own more than five buses are considered to be operators who do not come under this category for preference.

SRI M. KALYANASUNDARAM : The suggestion is not to reduce the number of the viable unit to less than five. The mark system only puts the cart before the horse. A four-bus operator gets the permit for the fifth bus while a one-bus operator, even if he gets a permit after five years, cannot get the second bus. This is how the mark system works. That is why I suggest that the Government should revise their rules. Will the Government revise the rules in such a way as to give the one-bus operator the second bus before the four-bus operator gets the fifth bus?

THE HON. SRI C. SUBRAMANIAM : The hon. Member is discussing policy questions, Sir.

THE HON. SRI B. PARAMESWARAN : This is a matter to be taken up by the Transport Committee of which the hon. Member is a Member.

Allocation of personnel on the reorganization of States

* 305 *Q.*—SRI M. NARAYANA KURUP : Will the Hon. the Minister for Finance be pleased to state whether any decision has been taken in the matter of allocation of personnel in the several services in the State consequent on the reorganization of States?

THE HON. SRI C. SUBRAMANIAM : The attention of the hon. Member is invited to the answer given to question No. 183 by the hon. Sri K. P. Gopalan, M.L.A., given in this House on 24th September 1956.

SRI M. NARAYANA KURUP : Have there not been subsequent developments since that question was answered?

THE HON. SRI C. SUBRAMANIAM : No revision of the principles laid down has taken place.